[2nd March 1925

Government Houses.

Indian music and art at the Government House.

*229 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to refer to my speech on page 911 of the Proceedings of the Council, Volume XVII, in which a suggestion was made for the introduction of an element of Indian music and art at the Government House and be pleased to state—

(a) whether Government are aware that the Indian Band is played at certain public places in Madras under the auspices of the Corporation or under other patronage; and

(b) whether any steps have been taken or are being contemplated for the introduction of an element of Indian music and art at the Government House?

A.—(a) Yes.

(b) Such matters are at His Excellency the Governor's exclusive discretion.

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"With reference to the answer to clause (b), may I ask whether it is not open to the Government or to any Member of the Government to bring such matters to the notice of His Excellency the Governor? Surely, the wishes of this House should be brought to the notice of His Excellency the Governor. If it has not been done in this case, why not?"

11-15 a.m.

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP:—"It is quite open to a Member of Government to bring any point to the notice of His Excellency but we have not had any suggestion that we should do so. If the hon. Member will kindly refer to the proceedings, last year, he will find that the hon. Member who brought up the subject closed by saying 'I therefore urge this point on the attention of His Excellency the Governor.' There was no suggestion to Government or to any Member of the Government that they should take any action in the matter."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI:—"We have not the advantage the hon. Member has of bringing these matters to the notice of His Excellency. We cannot address His Excellency from this House. If the hon. Member will not quibble, it will be much better that these matters are brought to the notice of His Excellency."

The hon. Sir ARTHUR KNAPP:—"That debate has already come to the notice of His Excellency."

Public Service.

The relationship of Mr. P. Govinda Menon, Sub-Assistant Director of Survey, to the Assistant Director.

*230. Q.—Mr. R. VEERIAN: Will the hon. the Home Member, the hon. the Law Member, the hon. the Member for Finance and the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Mr. P. Govinda Menon, the Sub-Assistant Director of Survey, is a direct brother of the Assistant Director and if so, whether it is in accordance with the policy of the public service that two brothers are put in the same department in such posts?

2nd March 1925]

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I have not heard so far about the distribution of time this year. But I remember very well the discussion which took place last year and presuming that I shall get notice three or four days before we actually make use of the distribution, I shall see that the wishes of hon. Members are conveyed to His Excellency the Governor."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"I am much obliged to you, Sir."

The hon Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—"The mattor has been considered, but it was found exceedingly difficult to lay down any particular order which was likely to suit the convenience of everybody."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I understand that it is not merely a question of order; but certain hon. Members are anxious that Ministers' salaries should be given an opportunity of discussion by this House."

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—"They were the subject of a separate grant last year, but as a matter of fact this year there has been combined with them the vote for a part of the Secretariat, namely, that which deals entirely with Transferred departments, and the two put together form one demand for a grant."

Mr. S. SATYAMURTI :—"May I invite the attention of the hon. the Finance Member to what has been said by the hon. Sir Basil Blackett, the Finance Member of the Government of India, who did not profess this supreme indifference to the wishes of the House? He went very much out of the way and said that there were 18 heads and in order to get an idea as to each one of them he would so arrange the demands as to give Members full opportunities of discussing and voting on the various grants. May I ask the hon. the Finance Member here if he has read the speech and if he will give us the same kind of benefit?"

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—"I have read the speech. But I think that my hon. Friend will find, if he examines our schedule of grants, that they have already been subdivided even more than those of the Government of India."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—"I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Member to the discussion that took place last year on this very subject when we had practically no time whatever to discuss it. During the course of that discussion an assurance was given both by you, Mr. President, and the hon. Sir Charles Todhunter that the matter would be looked into and I finally asked Mr. Davies to see that the spirit of the recommendation made during the discussion is observed in the arrangement this year. If that is done, we shall be quite satisfied."

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM :—"The matter has been looked into, but it was found that no suggestion that could be made was likely to avoid the disapproval of one section or another."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—"May I correct an erroneous impression in the mind of my hon. Friend? We are not speaking on behalf of the whole House and we never intended to do so. We, on behalf of the Members of the Opposition, wanted, on the assumption that responsibility still existed in the dyarchical system, that a fair opportunity, and no favour, should be given to us for the discussion of the Ministers' salaries. We never asked anything on

[2nd March 1925

behalf of the whole House. All that we want to know is this: whether working the constitution in the spirit in which it ought to be worked, Government were able to meet the demand made last year with regard to which you, Mr. President, expressed your sympathy?"

The hon. Mr. R. A. GRAHAM:—"There are something like 35 grants altogether and this particular grant comes as No. XI. It seems to me that the House should be able to reach the grant in the ordinary course."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI:—"Our difficulty was with respect to the various items grouped into one demand."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"I shall allow this matter to be discussed again as soon as I get some definite information."

Central subjects.

Departments under the control of the Government of India.

*235 Q.—Mr. J. A. SALDANHA: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) what are the functions exercised by the Madras Government in regard to the following departments which are now under the direct control of the Government of India, but portfolios of which (for local concerns) are stated to be in charge of the hon. the Finance Member (see L.C. Pro., Vol. XXI, p. 1), viz., (1) Customs, (2) Income-tax, (3) Marine, (4) Opium, (5) Post Office, (6) Salt, (7) Telegraphs and Telephones; and

(b) what are the concerns in these respective departments which pertain to the Local Government?

A.—The functions exercised by the Local Government in respect of the several subjects are indicated below:—

Sea Customs.—After the passing of the Central Board of Revenue Act, 1924 (Act IV of 1924), which came into force from 1st April 1924, the administration of Sea Customs has been taken over by the Central Board of Revenue. The Local Government through the agency of the Board of Revenue (Separate Revenue) at present exercise the powers and duties of the Chief Customs Authority only in respect of sections 144, 147, 148 and 151 of the Sea Customs Act.

Land Customs.—The Local Government exercise no control in the matter of Land Customs.

Income-tax.—The Local Government exercise no control over the administration of the subject; but the Governor-General in Council utilizes the agency of the Local Government in respect of certain questions relating to the establishment.

Marine.—This Government at present exercise administrative control in respect of all marine matters, whether relating to Central subjetcs or not.